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144241

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STATE 144241

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1. After four sessions US-Italian civil air negotiations are off to disappointing start. Issues still not clearly drawn. Instead of discussing type of agreement they desire, Italians have attempted to put onus for denunciation on US. ~~Cixxxmx~~ Current agreement described as heavily imbalanced in favor of US for nearly 20 years and tantamount to QUOTE advance payments UNQUOTE on new agreements more favorable to Italy. US has defined in detail principles upon which US civil air policy is based, and which are incorporated in over 50 US bilaterals and have been found, over time, to be fair to both partners. Italians, however, maintaim that none of their civil air agreements, save with US and UK, incorporate these ~~Bxxx~~ Bermuda principles, and that confidential protocol to UK agreement limits effectiveness of Bermuda principles in that bilateral.

(4)

2. On Italian request, route annex to new agreement is being ~~discussed~~ first. Italians claim US route schedule, as communicated

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prior to negotiations, is so vague as to defy analysis. In effort to meet Italian request for greater specificity, on February 21 US tabled revised route schedule with open intermediates and beyond rights described regionally. However, Italians continue to insist that they are unable to evaluate US route requests and to demand schedule containing enumerated points. (Italian gambit appears to force lengthy enumeration of US intermediate and beyond points, for which they could insist upon compensation in form of large number of points within US. They request nine US points.) Italians have resisted all efforts to focus discussion on their route requests.

3. In effort to keep discussion going, US has asked Italians to present their views on values of US route requests. While not responding directly to request, Italians have agreed to meet again February 26.

4. To date Italians are completely inflexible and refuse to consider taking up other aspects of agreement in event impasse over route schedules cannot be broken. Capomazza has indicated that he is prepared to break off talks unless US accedes to his request for enumerated route schedule. Neither on-record nor informal discussions lead us to believe that Italians are prepared to give on this point. In same vein, there has been no indication that, even if US enumerated points, Italians would be more flexible on other issues, for example capacity and multiple designation.

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